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SPIDER-MAN
THE ARACHNIS PROJECT
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SEP
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
DIRECT EDITION
MORE MAYHEM IN OUR NATION'S CAPITAL AS... THE DIGGERS STRIKE!

9:30 PM IN THE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY ANTIQUITIES DEPARTMENT IN WASHINGTON, DC.
OLD WEBHEAD'S IN BETWEEN THE PROVERBIAL ROCK AND A HARD PLACE.
THE SNEAK-THIEF'S POSTED BOUNTY REPRESENTS A POSITIVE CASH INFLUX TO ME, SPOILER. I WON'T LET YOU TAKE HER.
THAT WOULD GENERATE A NEGATIVE CASH FLOW.
NO CAN DO, WARRANT.
IT'S MY DUTY TO EXTERMINATE ALL PERSONS WHO LAY EYES UPON MYSELF OR ANY MEMBER OF MY ORGANIZATION.
COME ON, BOYS! THERE'S NO REASON TO FIGHT OVER LITTLE OLD ME!
GREAT. I'M STUCK BETWEEN TWO GUN TOTING LUNATICS INTENT UPON OUT MACHO-ING EACH OTHER.
ONLY PROBLEM IS, WHICHEVER ONE OF THESE GOONS WINS THIS FRACAS...
... I LOSE!

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THE ARACHNIS PROJECT, PART TWO:
BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE!
THE STORY SO FAR: SPIDER-MAN TRAVELS TO WASHINGTON, DC AFTER LEARNING THAT HIS FORMER COLLEGE PROFESSOR, TOSHIRO MIKASHI, IS INVOLVED IN A STUDENT'S MURDER. EN ROUTE TO QUESTIONING HIS FORMER MENTOR ABOUT THE CASE, SPIDEY APPREHENDS SNEAK THIEF, A YOUNG BURGLAR AUDITIONING FOR A SECRET SOCIETY BY STEALING A PRICELESS VASE. NOW HANG ON TIGHT, BECAUSE THERE'S NO TIME TO EXPLAIN ANYTHING ELSE.
HEY, SPOILER, LET'S FORGET ALL THIS FILL YA FULLA LEAP STUFF AND HAVE SOME REAL FUN!
YOU TAKE CARE OF THESE TWO BOZOS WHILE I FILL MY PACK UP WITH BOOTY!
HAH! BABY, I GOT BLISTERS OLDER THAN YOU!
MIKE LACKEY - WRITER
ANDREW WILDMAN - BREAKDOWNS
STEPHEN BASHERVILLE - FINISHES
JAVE MOEPE - LETTERER
CHIA-CHI HUANG - COLORIST
ERIC FEIN - EDITOR
FANNY FINGEROTH - GROUP EDITOR
TOM DEFALCO - EDITOR IN CHIEF

THESE TWO LOONS ARE GONNA START SHOOTING ANY SECOND... AND THAT BURGLAR BABE'S A SITTING DUCK JUST WEBBED TO THE FLOOR! I'VE GOTTA GET SNEAK THIEF OUTTA HERE... AFTER ALL, NEITHER ONE OF US IS BULLETPROOF!
AND PERHAPS BY THAT TIME I'LL EVEN FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO ABOUT THIS WHOLE MESS!
I HAVE NO WISH TO FIGHT YOU, SPOILER.
EVERY MINUTE I SQUANDER IN COMBAT IS ONE I COULD USE MAKING MORE MONEY!

HEY, SPIDEY, YOUR WEBS AREN'T SO HOT. I MANAGED TO SLIP OUT OF MY BOOTS YOU CLEVERLY WEBBED TO THE FLOOR, EARLIER.
HEY, SHOW SOME RESPECT! THESE STUPID STICKY POWERS ARE GONNA SAVE YOUR BUTT... NOW KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN AND SHUT UP!
SPANK
TELL COUGHING MAN I'M SORRY, SPOILER!
WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE BEFORE THESE GUYS MAKE LIKE RAMBO PART 4!
TOO LATE! I'M WARNING YOU, SPIDEY! THIS BETTER NOT LEAVE MARKS ON MY OUTFIT!
AHHH, GRASSHOPPER. SO MUCH TO LEARN.
YOU CERTAINLY ARE!! YOU BLEW IT, BIG TIME, SNEAK THIEF!
HEY... LEGGO! YOU'RE USING YOUR STUPID STICKY POWER ON ME!
GROSS!
BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM
KSSSHUU!
SUCKER! YOU SHOULD HAVE PADDED ME DOWN FOR WEAPONS BEFORE YOU LEFT ME HERE.
I'LL BURN MY WAY OUT OF THIS STUPID WEB WITH MY LASER PEN.
STAY PUT. WE'LL GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS WHEN I GET BACK!
NICE GUY THAT SPOILER. FRIEND OF YOURS?
MORE LIKE A BABYSITTER.
HEY... WHERE AM I GONNA GO?

I'M IMPRESSED, WARRANT. YOU'RE ALMOST AS GOOD AS I'D HEARD.
OF COURSE, I'M BETTER.
COME TO THINK OF IT, SPOILER. I HEAR THERE'S A BOUNTY ON YOU TOO!
SAD--
BLAM BLAM BLAM
--BUT TRUE!
ARRGH! YOU LOWLY COWARD!
ONCE AGAIN, WARRANT, GUILTY AS CHARGED!
ON THE OTHER HAND, YOU'RE THE ONE BLEEDING.
LOOKS LIKE I GOT HERE JUST IN TIME!
RIGHT-O, WEBS. TIME TO DIE!
YOU CREEP! WARRANT'S NO PRIZE, BUT AT LEAST HE HAS SOME SENSE OF MORALITY... TWISTED THOUGH IT MAY BE!
I SWEAR, IF HE...!
YEAH, YEAH... LIKE YOU AREN'T BOTH GOING TO BLAZES TOGETHER!
PHOONT
THAT MANIAC'S FIRED SOME KIND OF GRENADE!
WE'RE ALL GOING TO HOBOKEN IN A HANDBASKET UNLESS...!
THWIPP
THWAPP!!
GOTTA DEFLECT IT AWAY FROM WARRANT!
I DID IT!!
YOU MORON!
BWAMM!
RR-RRUMMMMBLLE!
YOU'RE BRINGING THE HOUSE DOWN AROUND OUR...!

SHEESH! I WONDER IF EVEN THOSE TWO BRUISERS COULD'VE SURVIVED THAT! AHH, WHO AM I KIDDING?
UH OH! SPIDER-SENSE!
ONE OF MY PLAYMATES IS BUSTING HIS WAY OUT! BUT... WHICH ONE?
IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN A TON OF FALLING DEBRIS TO STOP SPOILER!
SAY A PRAYER FOR YOUR LAMEBRAIN BUDDY WARRANT! HE'S AS DEAD AS YOU'RE GONNA BE!
WARRANT'S LIKE A BAD PENNY. AND THAT OTHER GUY LOOKED TOUGH ENOUGH TO...!
SKOOOSH!
YOU'LL NEVER ESCAPE ME, SPOILER... NO MATTER HOW MANY GRENADES YOU THROW!!
THIS IS FIELD AGENT SPOILER REPORTING TO HOMEBASE.
AND ROCKET BOOTS? TRES GAUCHE!
THWIPP
THOOMP
SNEAK THIEF HAS FAILED HER AUDITION AND SHOULD BE EXFILTRATED FROM THE SCENE ASAP.

YOU IDIOT, SPIDER-MAN! YOU COST ME THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS BY LETTING THE SNEAK THIEF ESCAPE!
IF I'M AN IDIOT, WARRANT, IT'S FOR SAVING THAT THICK HEAD OF YOURS FROM THE GRENADE!
I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR...
WHO DOES? NOW LISTEN UP, TOUGH GUY. I NEED TO KNOW WHO THAT SPOILER GUY WAS. SO MAKE WITH THE INFO.
YOU MUST BE JOKING. AND IF YOU'RE NOT...
I'M STILL NOT GOING TO TELL YOU ANYTHING.
YOU LOUSY CREEP! YOU COLD-BLOODED MONSTER!
MAYBE I COULDN'T STOP YOU FROM KILLING THE LIZARD*, AND MAYBE I CAN'T STOP YOU TONIGHT... BUT ONE DAY I WILL!
* WEB OF SPIDEY #12.--ERIC
AND UNTIL SUCH FATEFUL DAY?
AAAH, I HOPE YOU GET HIT BY A TRUCK.
STILL, NOTHING SAYS I CAN'T FOLLOW... OOPS!
SORRY SPIDER-MAN... IF THAT'S WHO YOU REALLY ARE.
WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS GETUP IS FOR? NOVELTY BALLOON DELIVERY?
SORRY, BUT WE CAN'T LET YOU INTERFERE WITH OFFICIAL BUSINESS OF A FEDERAL OPERATIVE.
SUPER.
MEANWHILE...
HA! I OUTSMARTED EVERY ONE OF THEM...
...EVEN SPOILER! IF I BEAT HIM BACK TO BASE WITH THE PRIZE, I'LL HAVE MADE OUT EVEN BETTER THAN I'D HOPED!

JUST LOOK AT THIS PLACE! IT'S TOTALLED! SHOULD WE WAIT FOR BACK-UP, CAPTAIN?
THERE'S TOO MUCH VALUABLE STUFF IN THERE... GET MOVING!
YES, SIR!
GREAT. GET MY NECK BROKEN FOR SOME STUPID JUNK!
ACROSS CAMPUS, IN THE INDOOR PARKING LOT.
LUCKY THING I HAD THE FORESIGHT TO HOTWIRE THIS GTO BEFORE EVERYTHING HIT THE FAN!
IF I CAN JUST MAKE IT TO THE FREEWAY, I'M SET!
SCREEECH!
HEY! THIS IS FUN!
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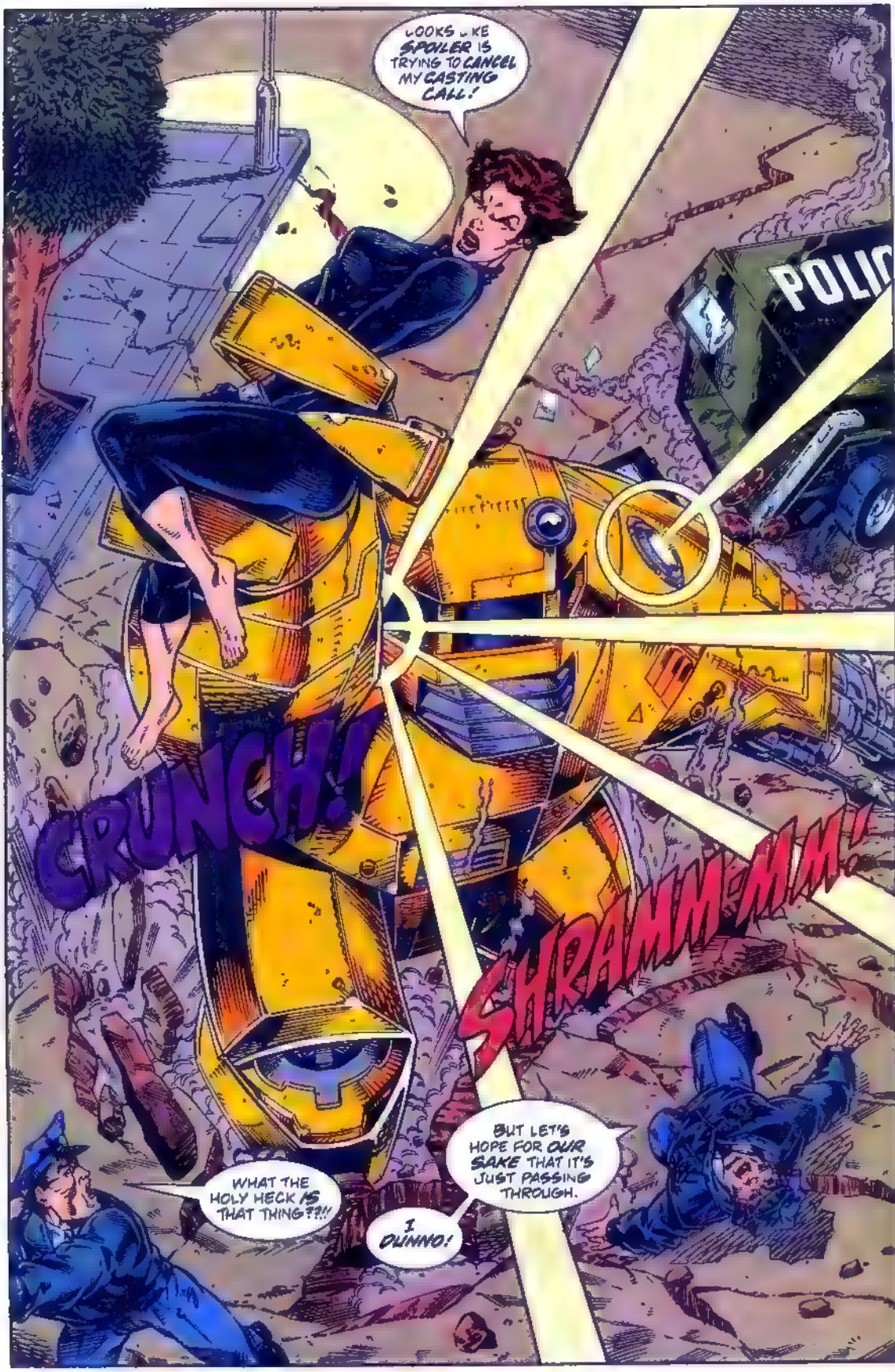
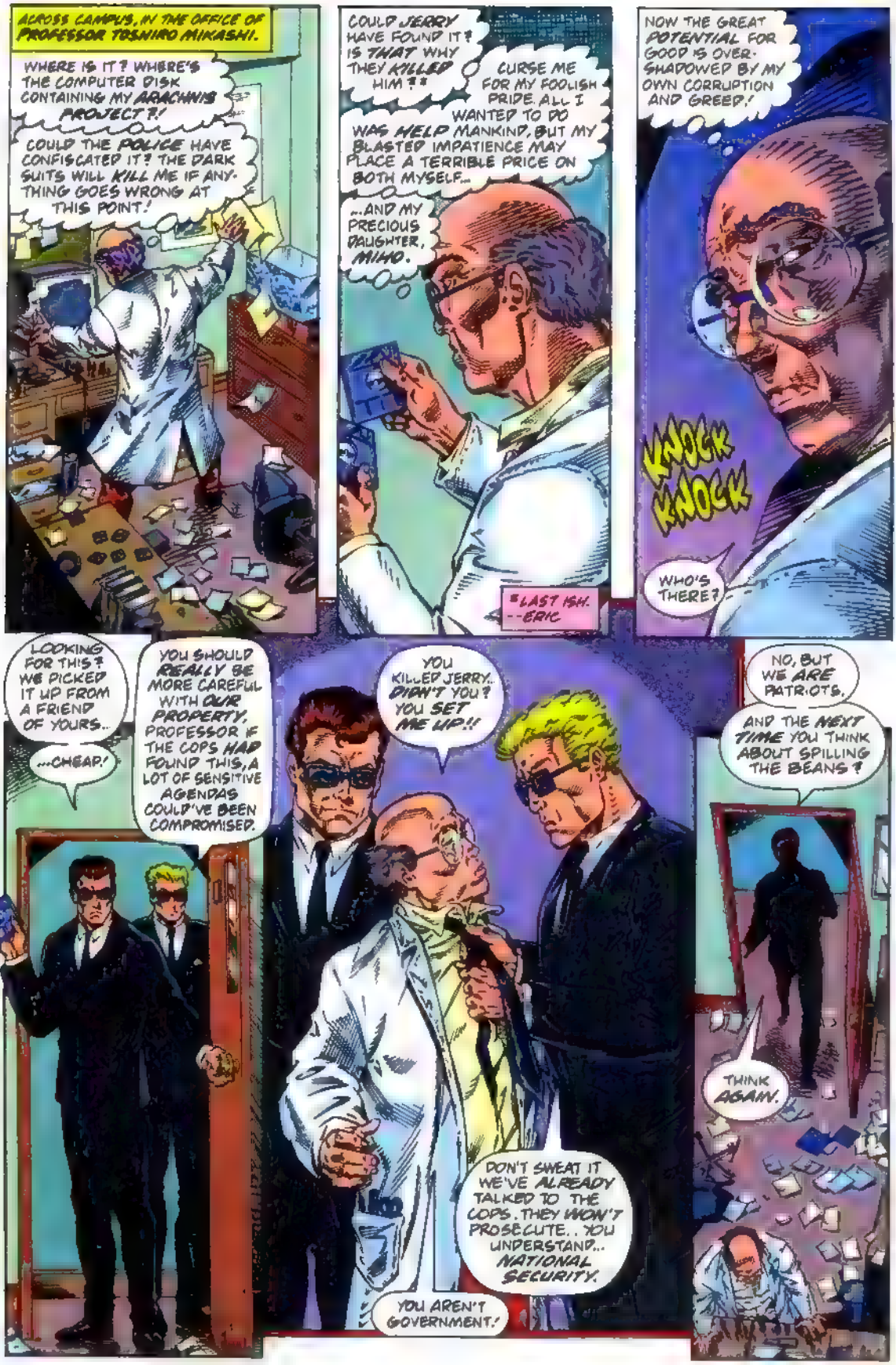
WHAT THE...? HIM AGAIN?!
I HATE THAT GUY!
HOPE YOU'RE WEARING YOUR SEAT BELT...
...AFTER ALL, SNEAK THIEF... SAFETY FIRST!
YOWZA!
KA-ZAP!
SPLAMM!

GET YOUR ALUMINUM FOIL-WRAPPED MITTS OFF'A ME, YOU MISOGYNIST JERK!
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT. I SUGGEST YOU USE IT.
C-KLIKKK!
YEAH, BIG MAN! REAL TOUGH GUY!
THAT'S RIGHT, LITTLE LADY... HE IS. THAT'S WHY THE CITY OF WASHINGTON, D.C. HIRED HIM ON A TEMPORARY BASIS.
GOOD WORK, WARRANT. THIS CRIME WAVE HAS BEEN LOUSY FOR THE TOURISM MARKET. WE'LL PASS YOUR CHECK ALONG TO YOU THROUGH MR. REYNARD, AS PER YOUR USUAL ARRANGEMENTS.
NOW HOW ABOUT EASING AN OLD COP'S CURIOSITY AND TELLING HOW YOU BAGGED THIS LITTLE THIEF?
@$#% +&%$ STUPID %$@'& COPS!!
IT'S EMBARRASSINGLY SIMPLE.
THAT IS, EMBARRASSING FOR YOU.
BY GOING THROUGH THE REPORTS OF SNEAK THIEF'S PREVIOUS CRIMES, I DISCOVERED HER ABILITY TO THWART VIRTUALLY ANY HIGH-TECH ALARM SYSTEM... EXCEPT THOSE UTILIZING ULTRA-VIOLET BEAMS. THAT GAVE ME HER POSITION.
SHUT UP, YOU GEEK! CAN'T A GIRL HAVE HER LITTLE SECRETS?
USING THIS MAGNETIC STRIP AS A TRACING UNIT, I WAS ABLE TO TRACK HER DOWN REGARDLESS OF HER INITIAL ESCAPE.
BE CAREFUL WITH THAT!
HERE'S YOUR PRICELESS ANTIQUE, MR. CURATOR.
HARDLY PRICELESS, WARRANT. YOU SAW TO THAT!
YOUR "PROTECTION SERVICES" COST MORE THAN THAT THING IS WORTH!
THAT'S NOT MY FAULT.

LISTEN HERE, YOU TIN-PLATED TROGLODYTE! THERE WAS NO REASON FOR ALL THIS DAMAGE!
I'D HAVE DONE BETTER LETTING THE INSURANCE COVER THE LOSS!
CAN'T BLAME YOUR BAD BUSINESS SENSE ON ME I'M STRICTLY WORK-FOR-HIRE.
LOOKS LIKE THE END OF ONE MYSTERY... NOW HOW ABOUT THE OTHER?
UH-OH! SPIDER-SENSE!
FREAKING BUCKET-HEAD THINKS HE'S SO GREAT
WHATSA-MATTER, BOYS? YOU JEALOUS?
NEVER MIND. JUST KEEP MOVING.
ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL JOB I'LL CHECK IN WITH REYNARD AND SEE WHAT OTHER CASES HE HAS COOKING.
HEY... WHAT'S THAT SHAKING? CAN YOU FEEL THE STREET TREMBLING?
IT'S PROBABLY JUST YOUR STOMACH GROWLING.
MAYBE THE SUBWAY?
WHAT'S WITH THE MINI-EARTHQUAKE?
FEELS LIKE SOMETHING'S BURROWING ITS WAY UP THROUGH THE...!
SHRRAAKKK!
UH-OHH!

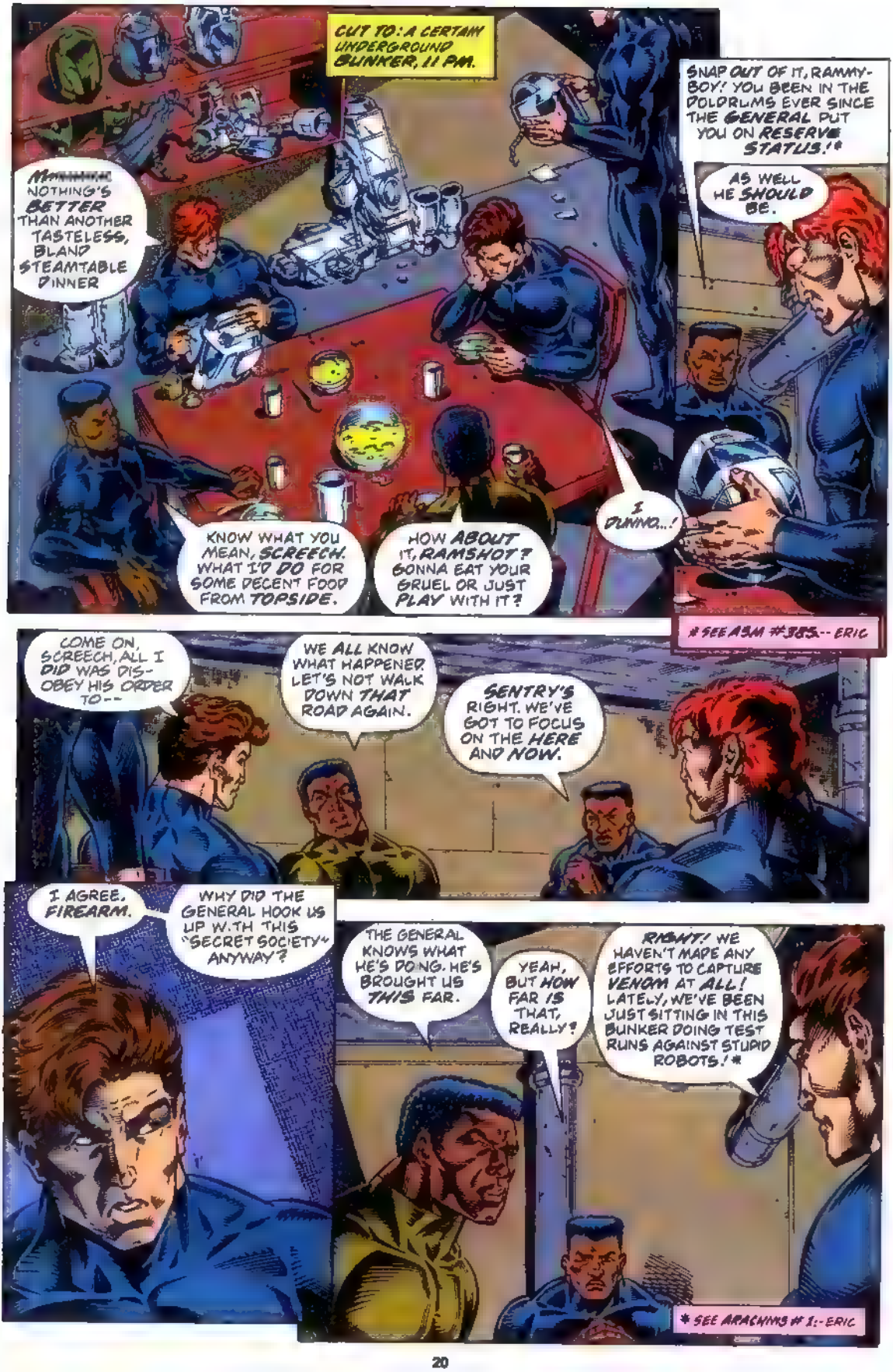

LOOKS LIKE SPOILER IS TRYING TO CANCEL MY CASTING CALL!
POLIC
CRUNCH!
SHRAMM-M-M!
WHAT THE HOLY HECK IS THAT THING?!!!
I DUNNO!
BUT LET'S HOPE FOR OUR SAKE THAT IT'S JUST PASSING THROUGH.

THIS IS GREAT! WE CAME TO COVER THE MURDER, NOW THIS ALIENS REJECT SHOWS UP!
SATELLITE HOOK-UP IS A GREEN LIGHT!
NOTHING BEATS GETTING TWO STORIES FOR THE PRICE OF ONE!
WE'RE LIVE FROM COAST TO COAST!
HEY! AREN'T ANY OF YOU MACHO TOUGH GUYS GONNA HELP A GIRL OUT?
SORRY, LADY! WE DON'T MAKE THE NEWS, WE ONLY REPORT IT!
YEAH! WE TOOK AN OATH OF NON-INTERFERENCE!
STEP BACK! KEEP AWAY FROM THE VEHICLE!
IT TALKS!
LOOK OUT, MIKE! THAT THING'S COMING RIGHT AT US!
...IT'S GOING TO IF I DON'T HELP OUT!
TWIP!
CAN'T MOVE IN TIME!
CAN'T TELL IF THAT THING...WHATEVER IT IS...IS TRYING TO MOW THEM OVER OR NOT! BUT ONE THING'S FOR SURE...
THRUNTCH!
UHHHH, MAYBE WE SHOULD LET THE TRAFFIC 'COPTERS COVER THIS ONE!
UHHH, OKAY!

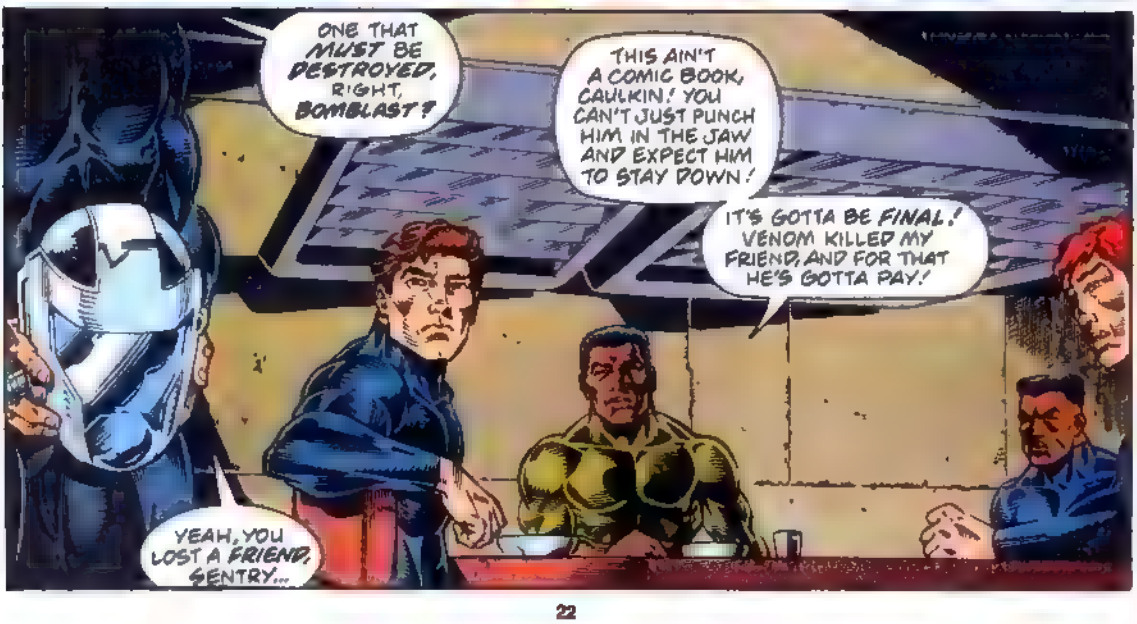

ACROSS CAMPUS, IN THE OFFICE OF PROFESSOR TOSHIRO MIKASHI.
WHERE IS IT? WHERE'S THE COMPUTER DISK CONTAINING MY ARACHNIS PROJECT?!
COULD THE POLICE HAVE CONFISCATED IT? THE DARK SUITS WILL KILL ME IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG AT THIS POINT!
COULD JERRY HAVE FOUND IT? IS THAT WHY THEY KILLED HIM??
CURSE ME FOR MY FOOLISH PRIDE. ALL I WANTED TO DO WAS HELP MANKIND, BUT MY BLASTED IMPATIENCE MAY PLACE A TERRIBLE PRICE ON BOTH MYSELF...
...AND MY PRECIOUS DAUGHTER, MIHO.
"LAST ISH. --ERIC
NOW THE GREAT POTENTIAL FOR GOOD IS OVERSHADOWED BY MY OWN CORRUPTION AND GREED.!
KNOCK KNOCK
WHO'S THERE?
LOOKING FOR THIS? WE PICKED IT UP FROM A FRIEND OF YOURS..
...CHEAP!
YOU SHOULD REALLY BE MORE CAREFUL WITH OUR PROPERTY, PROFESSOR. IF THE COPS HAD FOUND THIS, A LOT OF SENSITIVE AGENDAS COULD'VE BEEN COMPROMISED.
YOU KILLED JERRY.. DIDN'T YOU? YOU SET ME UP!!
DON'T SWEAT IT. WE'VE ALREADY TALKED TO THE COPS. THEY WON'T PROSECUTE.. YOU UNDERSTAND... NATIONAL SECURITY.
YOU AREN'T GOVERNMENT.!
NO, BUT WE ARE PATRIOTS.
AND THE NEXT TIME YOU THINK ABOUT SPILLING THE BEANS?
THINK AGAIN.

AND BACK WHERE THE ACTION IS...
STEP BACK FROM THE VEHICLE! THIS UNIT IS ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS!
HEY! COME ON! I REALLY MEAN IT!!
SPONK!!
SORRY, PAL! BUT THIS FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD SPIDER-MAN ISN'T GOING ANYWHERE UNTIL YOU LET THE SNEAK THIEF GO!!
IT'S STILL NOT TOO LATE TO GIVE UP YOUR LIFE OF CRIME AND START LIFE ANEW AS A JAPANESE MOVIE MONSTER!
MAN! WHAT I WOULDN'T DO FOR A NUCLEAR-POWERED NUTCRACKER RIGHT NOW!
BUT I'LL SETTLE FOR MY PATENTED LASER PEN INSTEAD!
I JUST HOPE I CAN BURN MY WAY OUT OF THIS CLAW BEFORE IT BURROWS BACK UNDERGROUND!
WHAT THE HECK IS SPIDER-MAN DOING HERE IN D.C.?
WHO CARES? AT LEAST HE'S GIVING US A CHANCE TO REGROUP!
CALL FOR BACK-UP!!

HOMEBASE, THIS IS DIGGER ONE!
HAVE ENCOUNTERED SPIDER-MAN DURING EXTRACTION!
I WAS HOPING YOU COULD TELL ME!
AM KEEPING HIM AT BAY WITH CONTROLLED, SUSTAINED BURSTS OF WILLY PETE!*
THOOOSH!
SPIDER-MAN?!?! WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?
TALK ABOUT A HOT FOOT...!
DIGGER ONE, THIS IS HOMEBASE! WITHDRAW, REPEAT... WITHDRAW!
HELP!
DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME TWICE!!
THEY'RE ESCAPING!
*A.K.A WHITE PHOSPHOROUS REALLY NASTY STUFF BURNS AT 3000° --ERIC
WHAT'RE YOU STANDING THERE FOR?
WE'VE GOT TO HELP HER!
KRUMP!
FORGET IT, WEBHEAD! THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN DIG THROUGH ALL THAT RUBBLE!
LET ME THROUGH! MAYBE I CAN HELP!!
UHHHHH, OKAY!?
I'M PAUL BAKER, GEOLOGY DEPARTMENT SUPERVISOR. I SAW THE FRACAS AND CAME RUNNING!
WITH THIS HANDHELD SONAR UNIT, I CAN READ THAT HIS ESCAPE TUNNEL IS COLLAPSING IN ON ITSELF. HE'S MOVING FAST, TOO... ALREADY 300 YARDS UNDERGROUND!
WISH I HAD THE HULK'S BEEPER NUMBER.
THANKS ANYWAY, DOC.
LOOKS LIKE I'LL HAVE TO SOLVE THIS MYSTERY FROM THE OPPOSITE END!


CUT TO: A CERTAIN UNDERGROUND BUNKER, 11 P.M.
MMMMMM... NOTHING'S BETTER THAN ANOTHER TASTELESS, BLAND STEAMTABLE DINNER
KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN, SCREECH. WHAT I'D DO FOR SOME DECENT FOOD FROM TOPSIDE.
HOW ABOUT IT, RAMSHOT? GONNA EAT YOUR GRUEL OR JUST PLAY WITH IT?
SNAP OUT OF IT, RAMMY-BOY! YOU BEEN IN THE DOLDRUMS EVER SINCE THE GENERAL PUT YOU ON RESERVE STATUS!*
AS WELL HE SHOULD BE.
I DUNNO...!
* SEE ASM #385 -- ERIC
COME ON, SCREECH, ALL I DID WAS DIS-OBEY HIS ORDER TO--
WE ALL KNOW WHAT HAPPENED. LET'S NOT WALK DOWN THAT ROAD AGAIN.
SENTRY'S RIGHT. WE'VE GOT TO FOCUS ON THE HERE AND NOW.
I AGREE, FIREARM.
WHY DID THE GENERAL HOOK US UP W.TH THIS "SECRET SOCIETY" ANYWAY?
THE GENERAL KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING. HE'S BROUGHT US THIS FAR.
YEAH, BUT HOW FAR IS THAT, REALLY?
RIGHT! WE HAVEN'T MADE ANY EFFORTS TO CAPTURE VENOM AT ALL! LATELY, WE'VE BEEN JUST SITTING IN THIS BUNKER DOING TEST RUNS AGAINST STUPID ROBOTS!*
* SEE ARACHNIS #1 :- ERIC

I REALIZE THAT THE JURY IS A TEAM, AND WE'VE GOT TO ACT LIKE ONE, BUT I'VE GOT TO SPEAK MY MIND!
WE'VE JUST BEEN FLYING IN A HOLDING PATTERN SINCE WE GOT HERE, AND THE GENERAL AND HIS NAMELESS PALS AREN'T BRINGING US IN FOR A LANDING!
I MEAN, DO ANY OF YOU KNOW WHO THOSE DARK SUITS ARE? ANY OF YOU??!!
I THINK THEY'RE GOVERNMENT CIA OR NSA OR MAYBE DOD!!
WHAT DOES IT MATTER WHO THEY ARE? THEY OFFERED US A DEAL. WE PROVIDE TOPSIDE SECURITY MEASURES AND PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF THIS BUNKER...
...AND IN TURN, THEY'LL HELP US IN OUR MISSION TO DESTROY THE V-MAN!
ANOTHER THING... I STILL DON'T SEE WHY WE HAVE TO KILL HIM!
I WAS IN GRENADA AND THE GULF WAR. I'VE SEEN THINGS THAT WOULD MAKE YOUR SPINE MELT. BUT WHEN I SAW WHAT VENOM DID TO HUGH TAYLOR DURING HIS BREAKOUT FROM THE VAULT...
...IT CONVINCED ME THAT WE AREN'T HUNTING ANY MAN... BUT A VICIOUS MONSTER!


ONE THAT MUST BE DESTROYED, RIGHT, BOMBLAST?
THIS AIN'T A COMIC BOOK, CAULKIN! YOU CAN'T JUST PUNCH HIM IN THE JAW AND EXPECT HIM TO STAY DOWN!
IT'S GOTTA BE FINAL! VENOM KILLED MY FRIEND, AND FOR THAT HE'S GOTTA PAY!
YEAH, YOU LOST A FRIEND, SENTRY...

...BUT I LOST A BROTHER!
AND MY FATHER... GENERAL ORWELL TAYLOR... LOST HIS FIRSTBORN SON!
THAT MONSTER WAS JUSTLY INCARCERATED, AND MURDERED GOOD MEN IN COLD BLOOD TO REGAIN HIS FREEDOM. AND IT'S OUR JOB... NO..
...OUR DUTY... ...TO AVENGE THOSE PEOPLE!
YOU ALL HAVE YOUR REASONS FOR BEING A PART OF THIS.
SENTRY... MY BROTHER MAX WAS YOUR FRIEND. BOMBLAST... YOU'RE A HIGHLY TRAINED MERCENARY, ON THIS RIDE FOR THE BUCKS. FIREARM... YOUR SCIENTIFIC CURIOSITY ABOUT ALIEN LIFE WILL ONLY BE SATISFIED WHEN YOU AUTOPSY THIS BEAST. AND EVEN YOU, RAMSHOT...
...YOU WERE JUST A BURNED-OUT, DRUG-ADDICTED COP WHEN MY FATHER FOUND YOU AND DUSTED YOU OFF. YOU OWE HIM FOR SAVING YOUR LIFE!
ALTHOUGH FRANKLY, I COULDN'T CARE LESS WHY ANY OF YOU ARE HERE. THAT SPACE-BORN FREAK KILLED MY BROTHER. I DON'T CARE WHY ANY OF YOU TAKE HIM DOWN...
...AS LONG AS YOU DO.
CUT TO: A HOTEL ROOM IN SAN FRANCISCO.
SO DRAKE AND HIS BUDDIES HAVE MOVED THEIR PLAYPEN TO THE CAPITAL, HAVE THEY? LOOKS LIKE I'M HEADED FOR DC!
WHAT?
WHY, OF COURSE WE CAN VISIT OUR PESKY PAL SPIDER-MAN WHILE WE'RE THERE!
MORE ON THIS GUY NEXT ISSUE

WASHINGTON, DC THE MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE, 11:30 PM.
SOME SINISTER SECRET SOCIETY SEEMS TO BE BEHIND THIS WAVE OF THEFTS THAT'S BEEN PLAGUING THE CITY BY USING "HIRED HANDS" LIKE SNEAK THIEF AND SPOILER!
TV NEWS SAID MIKASHI'S RUMORED TO BE IN BED WITH SOME COVERT GOVERNMENT STUFF. COULD THE MURDER BE SOME KIND OF DECOY?
MAYBE I'M JUST BEING PARANOID... AFTER ALL, I AM IN THE MECCA OF CONSPIRACY COUNTRY... BUT WHAT IF IT'S THE SAME GROUP RESPONSIBLE FOR BOTH ITEMS ON MY MYSTERY MENU?
I MEAN, JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE PARANOID DOESN'T MEAN EVERY-ONE'S NOT OUT TO GET YOU!
HERE WE ARE THE CITY MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE.
SHOULDN'T BE TOO HARD TO HACK MY WAY INTO THE MURDERED STUDENT'S FILE... AHA!
YUCK! ACCORDING TO THIS, THE STUDENT'S BODY HAD BROKEN DOWN, COLLAPSED... ON THE CELLULAR LEVEL. ALMOST AS IF D'PPED IN SOME KIND OF SUPER-TOXIC ACID.
COULD THIS BE SOME NEW WEAPON MIKASHI'S WORKING ON? DID THE LAB STUDENT GET TOO CLOSE?
OR DID MY FRIEND GET FRAMED? MAYBE BY THE PEOPLE HE'S WORKING FOR... OR ALLEGEDLY WORKING FOR? MAYBE THEY CONSIDER HIM A LOOSE CANNON AND WANTED TO SHUT HIM UP?
FACE IT, SPIDEY... THIS IS ALL GUESSWORK. THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT IF MIKASHI IS A MURDERER...
...AND THAT'S TO TALK TO THE MAN HIMSELF!

CUT TO: MIKASHI'S HOUSE, OUTSIDE OF TOWN, MIDNIGHT.
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!
PROFESSOR MIKASHI? ARE YOU HOME?
IT'S ME... PETER PARKER!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT! PETER?!
ARE YOU A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES! COME IN!
IN THE FLESH, DOC.
SO GOOD TO SEE YOU, PETER! TELL ME... WHY HAS MY FAVORITE STUDENT COME TO VISIT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT?
I WISH I COULD SAY IT WAS FOR THE COMPANY, BUT...
DAD?! WHO IS IT? WHO'S THERE?
MIHO! THIS IS PETER PARKER, FORMERLY A STUDENT OF MINE BACK IN THE ESU DAYS. PETER, MY DAUGHTER, MIHO.
UHHH, HI.
HEH HEH HEH. BLESS YOU DAUGHTER... YOU'RE MY ONLY JOY.
PETER, LET ME SHOW YOU THE DEN.
S'A PLEASURE.
DON'T KEEP POPS UP ALL NIGHT GABBING AWAY LIKE AN OLD HEN. HE NEEDS HIS BEAUTY SLEEP... AND LOTS OF IT!
YEAH... SEEYA, MIHO.
LET ME LEVEL WITH YOU... THIS IS NO SOCIAL CALL.
THAT MUCH I'VE ALREADY SURMISED.
I HEARD YOU WERE IN TROUBLE. IT WAS ON ALL THE NEWS. IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO?
YES.
YOU CAN LEAVE TOWN, NEVER COME BACK, AND FORGET THAT YOU EVER KNEW ME.

I'VE MADE SOME MISTAKES, PETER. I'VE GOTTEN INVOLVED WITH PEOPLE I SHOULDN'T HAVE... AND NOW I FEAR I'VE DUG A HOLE I CAN'T GET OUT OF.
AT FIRST I THOUGHT I'D ALLIED MYSELF WITH A SECRET BRANCH OF OUR GOVERNMENT, BUT NOW I KNOW THAT ISN'T THE CASE, THOUGH I FEAR THIS GROUP MAY HAVE ITS STICKY FINGERS ALL OVER OUR BUREAUCRACY.
MY STUDENT WAS MURDERED BY THESE PEOPLE BECAUSE I BEGAN TO BUCKLE UNDER MY CONSCIENCE.
THESE PEOPLE WISH TO KEEP MY ARACHNIS PROJECT FOR THEMSELVES!
"ARACHNIS PROJECT"?
YES. I'VE BEEN DEVELOPING IT FOR SOME TIME, EVEN BEFORE MY TENURE AT ESU. BUT I NEEDED FUNDING TO COMPLETE IT, AND THESE MEN HAVE VERY DEEP POCKETS.
I HAD HOPED TO EFFECT A CURE FOR THE MANY CANCERS THAT PLAGUE HUMANITY, BASING EVERYTHING UPON THE GENETIC MAKE-UP OF ARANEIDA*.
SPIDER-SENSE IS GIVING OFF A MILD BUZZ... ARE WE BEING WATCHED?
AS YOU KNOW FROM MY CLASSES, THE EXO-SKELETON SERVES MANY PURPOSES... INCLUDING THE EXPULSION OF TOXINS.
* SPIDERS. --ERIC
THIS IS BUG BITE SIX TO HOMEBASE. OUR "BUGS" DETECT THAT LOOSE LIPS MAY BE ABOUT TO SINK SHIPS!
BRING THE PROF BACK TO BASE... HIS DAUGHTER, TOO.
I'D HOPED THAT PERHAPS, BY DEVISING SOME SORT OF ARTIFICIAL EXO-SKELETON, WE COULD DRAW SUCH CANCERS OR POISONS OUT OF INFECTED PATIENTS...
...MUCH THE WAY OUR HAIR AND FINGERNAILS ALREADY COLLECT TOXINS AND WASTES IN OUR OWN HUMAN BODIES.
WHAT ABOUT HIS PLAYMATE?
EXPENDABLE... REPEAT: EXPENDABLE...
SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH THAT, PROF? SOUNDS DOWNRIGHT NOBLE, UNLESS...
...UNLESS SOMEONE WANTED TO CORRUPT ARANCHNIS...TURN IT INTO SOMETHING ELSE?

I FEAR YOU'RE CORRECT, PETER.
THEY'VE ALREADY CREATED A POWERFUL WEAPON BASED ON MY WORK, CREATING AN ARTIFICIAL ENZYME WHICH LITERALLY DIGESTS YOUR CHOSEN VICTIM. THAT IS WHAT KILLED JERRY.
WE'VE GOT TO BLOW THE WHISTLE, PROF!
STILL TINGLING... I BETTER STAY SHARP.
BUT ARACHNIS IS A BLACK PROJECT... ONE WHICH DOESN'T SHOW UP ON ANY OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT BUDGET. HOW COULD YOU PROVE IT EVEN EXISTS?
DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING? SOMEONE ON THE ROOF?
SPIDER-SENSES GOING RIGHT OFF THE SCALE!
COME ON, PROF! WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!!
GAS??!! COMING FROM THE CHIMNEY!
THEY MUST HAVE THE PLACE BUGGED... THEY HEARD US TALKING AND ARE TRYING TO SMOKE US OUT!
GET MIHO... I'LL BREAK A WINDOW!!
KWZZZZT
YOWWCH!!
THEY RAN AN ELECTRICAL CHARGE THROUGH THE METAL WINDOW FRAME!

WELL THEN, MAYBE I CAN PUNCH MY WAY THROUGH THE WALL!
SPRAK-KK!
NO GOOD... TOO WEAK... ONLY CAUGHT A LUNG-FUL OF FUMES... BUT IT WAS ENOUGH!
MIKASHI'S OUT LIKE A LIGHT... I WON'T BE COMPROMISING MY SPIDER-IDENTITY! NOT THAT IT MATTERS--!
MAYBE I CAN STILL DRAG THE PROF AND MIHO OUTSIDE... RESCUE THEM!
CAN'T PASS OUT, CAN'T GIVE UP!!
CAN'T QUIT NOW.....!
RATHER IMPRESSIVE... OUR TRANQ GAS SHOULD HAVE KNOCKED THIS GUY OUT MINUTES AGO.
I'LL SLAP THE CUFFS ON THE OLD MAN. AGENT 68... CHECK ON THE GIRL UPSTAIRS. WHATCHA WANT TO DO WITH THE HOUSE GUEST?
I'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM, 55. AFTER ALL, HIS HEAD... LIKE THIS ROOM...
...COULD USE SOME VENTILATION!
NEXT ISSUE: MIKASHI TAKEN HOSTAGE! THE SECRET OF THE DARK SUITS REVEALED! MORE ANSWERS! MORE QUESTIONS! LOTS OF GUNPLAY! AND SPIDEY VS. THE JURY!